

Message Text

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62

ACTION EUR-25

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: UK, PINT, EEC

SUBJECT: LABOR INFIGHTING OVER EC RENEGOTIATION SHARPENS

REF: LONDON 8266

1. SUMMARY: LABOR'S ANTI-MARKETEERS ARE INTENSIFYING THEIR ATTACKS ON FOREIGN SECRETARY CALLAGHAN OVER HIS CONDUCT OF EC RENEGOTIATION. PRIME MINISTER WILSON HAS MOVED TO KEEP THE DISPUTE WITHIN BOUNDS. END SUMMARY

2. MORE OF LABOR'S INFIGHTING OVER EC MEMBERSHIP SURFACED YESTERDAY (JULY 11) WITH PUBLICATION BY THE TIMES OF A CONFIDENTIAL INTERNAL LABOR PARTY DOCUMENT THAT

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CRITICIZES FOREIGN SECRETARY CALLAGHAN FOR HIS CONDUCT

OF RENEGOTIATION. THE DOCUMENT, PREPARED BY THE PARTY'S RESEARCH DEPARTMENT, WAS APPROVED JULY 10 AT A MEETING OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED BY THE PARTY TO MONITOR THE GOVERNMENT'S RENEGOTIATION OF EC MEMBERSHIP. THE MONITORING COMMITTEE IS HEAVILY WEIGHTED WITH ANTI-MARKETEERS. AT THE JULY 10 MEETING ONLY TWO OF THE EIGHT MEMBERS, PETER SHORE AND IAN MIKARDO, WERE PRESENT, AND BY THE TIME THE REPORT WAS PUT TO A VOTE, MIKARDO WAS ALONE AND APPROVED IT.

3. THE REPORT, WHICH IS THE SECOND IN THIS VEIN TO BE APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE, ACCUSES CALLAGHAN IN EFFECT OF DEVIATING FROM THE PARTY MANIFESTO. AMONG OTHER THINGS, IT TAKES HIM TO TASK FOR NOT PAYING SUFFICIENT ATTENTION TO UK SOVEREIGNTY AND PARLIAMENTARY POWERS.

4. CALLAGHAN WAS UNDERSTANDABLY ANNOYED BY THE REPORT AND BY ITS BEING LEAKED TO THE PRESS. HE RAISED THE MATTER WITH THE CABINET YESTERDAY, AND AS A RESULT PRIME MINISTER WILSON ORDERED GOVERNMENT MINISTERS TO BOYCOTT THE MONITORING COMMITTEE UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF ITS PROCEEDINGS COULD BE GUARANTEED. SINCE ITS CHAIRMAN, TONY BENN, AND THREE OF ITS SEVEN OTHER MEMBERS (PETER SHORE, JUDITH HART, AND ROY HATTERSLEY) FALL UNDER THIS BAN, THE OPERATION OF THE COMMITTEE HAS BEEN SEVERELY CURTAILED FOR THE TIME BEING.

5. COMMENT: THE ANTI-MARKETEERS IN THE LABOR PARTY ARE CLEARLY STEPPING UP THE PRESSURE ON CALLAGHAN. THE LEFT-WING BACKBENCHERS AND TRADE UNIONISTS WHO CRITICIZED CALLAGHAN IN A LETTER TO THE TIMES JULY 2 (REFTEL) WERE ONLY SAYING PUBLICLY WHAT ANTI-EC MINISTERS WERE SAYING BEHIND CLOSED DOORS. WE HAVE BEEN RELIABLY INFORMED THAT AT THE JULY 4 CABINET MEETING, THE ANTI-MARKETEERS, LED BY BARBARA CASTLE, GAVE CALLAGHAN A PARTICULARLY ROUGH TIME.

6. IN SUCH CLOSED SESSIONS CALLAGHAN NEITHER NEEDS NOR RECEIVES WILSON'S HELP TO DEFEND HIMSELF, BUT THE ACTIONS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF THE PARTY MONITORING COMMITTEE ON JULY 10 APPARENTLY WENT TOO FAR EVEN FOR THE PRIME MINISTER. IN REACTING DECISIVELY, HE HAS GIVEN ENCOURAGEMENT TO THOSE WHO WOULD LIKE TO BELIEVE THAT WHEN THE CRUNCH COMES ON EC MEMBERSHIP ITSELF, HE WILL THROW HIS SUPPORT TO THE PRO-MARKETEERS. BE THAT AS IT MAY, HIS PRIMARY CONCERN AT THIS JUNCTURE MUST BE TO PREVENT AN OPEN RUPTURE WITHIN THE PARTY PRIOR TO THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION.

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